

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANA 00674 160558Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 151400Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY SANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0433
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 0674

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR, YE, ET, SU
SUBJ: PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI ON ETHIOPIA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 0859

1. DURING FEBRUARY 13 MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI IN TAIZ, ETHIOPIA WAS AMONG NUMBER OF SUBJECTS DISCUSSED. AL-HAMDI STATED THAT AT PRESENT YEMENI/ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS ARE STRAINED AS A RESULT OF RECENT ETHIOPIAN THREATS TO YEMENI FISHERMEN AROUND THE ISLANDS OF HANISH AND SUQAR. AL-HAMDI SAID THAT YENEM WANTS TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA BUT HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY REBUFFED OVER THE LAST YEAR OR SO. AL-HAMDI CONTINUED THAT REPORTS REACHING SANA FROM ADDIS ABABA DESCRIBE THE SITUATION THERE AS CHAOTIC WITH LEFTIST ELEMENTS CLARLY IN THE ASCENDENCY. HE EXPRESSED GREAT CONCERN THAT THE UNSTABLE CONDITION IN ETHIOPIA WILL HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECT THROUGHTOUT THE HORN OF AFRICA.

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2. HE WENT ONTO SAY THAT YEMEN PREFERS TO SEE A UNITED ETHIOPIA WHICH AT THE SAME TIME ALLOWS FOR RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE ERITREANS TO SELF-EXPRESSION. HE SAID IDEALLY THIS PROBLEM SHOULD BE SETTLED BETWEEN ETHIOPIANS AND ERITREANS BUT EXPRESSED APPREHENSION THAT THE PRESENT ETHIOPAN REGIME WILL NOT BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH AND THUS THE

SITUATION IN ERITREA WILL CONTINUE TO WORSEN.

3. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ABOUT NUMAYRI'S RECENT SPEECH CONCERNING ETHIOPIA, AL-HAMDHI REPLIED THAT HE HAD NOT HAD A CHANCE TO STUDY THE SPEECH NOR HAD PRESIDENT NUMAYRI BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HIM ABOUT IT. HE NOTED THAT SUDANESE/YEMENI RELATIONS ARE CLOSE AND THAT IF YEMEN HAS TO CHOOSE YEMEN WILL SUPPORT SUDAN.

4. COMMENT: AT THE TIME OF MY MEETING I HAD NOT SEEN ADDIS ABABA'S 859 INDICATING THAT THE YAR WAS ALSO INCLUDED AMONG ETHIOPIA'S ENEMIES BY THE NEW ETHIOPIAN HEAD OF STATE MENGISTU. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO STATES HAVE, OF COURSE, BEEN DETERIORATING OVER THE LAST YEAR OR SO AND MENGISTU'S LATEST CHARACTERIZATION CAN ONLY MEAN THAT THE YARG'S PRESENT MORAL SUPPORT OF THE ERITREANS MAY WELL TURN INTO SOMETHING MORE TANGIBLE PARTICULARLY IF CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF SUDANESE/YEMENI RELATIONS.
SCOTES

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